

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 520 on the motion to invoke cloture on Jennifer Thurston to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 521 on the confirmation of Jennifer Thurston to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 522 on the motion to invoke cloture on Katherine Menendez to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 523 on the confirmation of Katherine Menendez to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 524 on the motion to invoke cloture on Mary Dimke to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 525 on the confirmation of Mary Dimke to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 526 on the confirmation of Rahm Emanuel to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 527 on the motion to invoke cloture on Gabriel Sanchez to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 528 on the motion to invoke cloture on Holly Thomas to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL L. HANNA

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate and honor the retirement of one of my senior staff members and friend who has served in my home State of Idaho for the last 13 years as the regional director of my Lewiston office, Michael "Mike" L. Hanna.

Following his retirement from the timber industry, Mike came to my staff after my first election to the U.S. Senate in May of 2009. I knew right away that he was a perfect fit for the regional director position in my Lewiston office. As a result, my chief of staff and I hired him immediately following his interview.

Mike was born in Boise, ID, and was raised there and in the Emmett Valley, where his parents' families worked as farmers and sawmill workers. Growing up in a farming and timber family eventually led him to the University of

Idaho, where he graduated with a bachelor of science degree in forest management in 1976.

Upon graduating from U of I, Mike began his 33-year career in the timber industry as a forester with the Idaho Department of Lands. After 12 years with the State of Idaho, he transitioned to the private sector, where he worked for Empire Lumber Company, Weyerhaeuser, and Three River Timber.

Given his expertise and vast knowledge of the timber industry, Mike was frequently called upon to participate in and lead collaborative groups and natural resource associations and organizations. To name but a few, he was a founding member of the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, president of the Intermountain Logging Conference board of directors, president of the Resource Organization on Timber Supply, or ROOTS, president of the Clearwater Resource Coalition, and the chairman of the Forestry Committee of the Intermountain Forestry Association. He was also recognized by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for his U.S. Forest Service stewardship contract work.

With his deep roots in Idaho and the timber industry, he was the perfect representative to the natural resource communities of the Clearwater Region, stationed out of my Lewiston office. During his 13 years of service as my regional director, he advised and guided my office through many complicated issues, like the Idaho roadless rule implementation, the salmon and steelhead management plans, Columbia River Treaty, Good Neighbor Authority, tribal relations, and too many other issues to name.

Mike and his wife Nancy have been married for 45 years and have made their home in Orofino, ID for 44 years, where they are an integral part of the fabric of the community. They have two children, Lindsay and Adam, and five grandchildren.

It is always difficult to lose a trusted staff member of Mike's character, experience, and knowledge, and I wish him and Nancy nothing but the best in their retirement and look forward to our continued friendship in the years ahead.

Congratulations and thank you for your outstanding service to my staff and the citizens of Idaho.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PALACE THEATER

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, today I rise to recognize the Palace Theater in Waterbury, CT as it celebrates 100 years of artistic achievement and advocacy.

The Palace Theater originally opened on January 28, 1922. With the culmination of a \$1 million investment in décor by Sylvester Z. Poli and the remark-

able architectural work of Thomas Lamb, the theater soon became a hub for cultural activity in Waterbury before the onset of World War II.

The ornate building started as a movie and vaudeville house. Over the past century, the Palace has hosted a wide breadth of performances and productions, from silent films to rock concerts and everything in between. In 1983, the U.S. Department of the Interior honored the Palace Theater by listing it on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1987, the theater closed for 18 years. However, a 3-year, \$30 million restoration, renovation, and expansion project impressively reshaped the Palace. When it reopened, the theater was a state-of-the-art, 90,000-square-foot arena. Now a vast complex, the Palace is known as Greater Waterbury's Center for the Performing Arts.

In its current state, the Palace hosts educational programming, Broadway tours, and a variety of family entertainment. The theater's team is committed to serving the greater Waterbury community by establishing not just a magnificent artistic site but also a highly regarded educational and cultural center.

The Palace Theater is recognized as one of the premier arts facilities in New England, and I have had the privilege of visiting on a number of occasions to speak with the staff there. I am continuously impressed by the Palace's record of achievement and the tireless dedication of everyone involved to furthering arts education and advocacy for countless Connecticut residents and visitors.

I applaud the theater on its extraordinary history of accomplishment, and I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating the Palace Theater on 100 years of excellence.●

TRIBUTE TO MARK BENNETT

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to commend Mark Bennett, who is retiring as chief of the water development division of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission after a 34-year career creating and preserving access to water in our State.

Through his work, Mark has helped provide clean, safe, and reliable water to countless Arkansans and has been instrumental in the conservation of our State's land and water resources. Thanks to Mark's dedication and commitment to the people of Arkansas, he has ensured that future generations will be able to enjoy the beautiful land and wildlife the Natural State is known for.

Mark is a true Arkansas success story. Raised near Lake Village and a graduate of Lakeside High School, Mark earned a bachelor's degree in both agricultural economics and banking and finance from Mississippi State University. He continued his education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law